News Release

READOUT: DEPARTMENT OF LABOR, WHITE HOUSE OFFICIAL, STATE ADMINISTRATORS, RESEARCHERS, OTHER STAKEHOLDERS DISCUSS BENEFITS OF EQUITABLE PAID LEAVE

WASHINGTON – The U.S. Department of Labor welcomed former Secretary of Labor and current White House Senior Advisor Tom Perez, other federal officials, state paid leave administrators, researchers and other stakeholders to the department's Washington headquarters on June 26, 2024, to discuss the latest research on paid family and medical leave and how these programs can be implemented equitably.

Organized by the department's Women's Bureau, the "Paid Leave: Equity in Implementation" conference had an in-person and online audience of approximately 200. In conjunction with the conference, the Women's Bureau released their latest paid leave issue brief of 2024.

"Having a paid leave law on the books is not enough," said Women's Bureau Director Wendy Chun-Hoon. "The design of the program and the way in which it's implemented also need to be equitable."

During the conference, Perez highlighted the Biden-Harris administration's commitment to paid family and medical leave. In his 2025 budget proposal, the President announced his plan to establish a national paid family and medical leave program. Administered by the Social Security Administration, the program would provide eligible employees up to 12 weeks of leave to care for and bond with a new child; care for a seriously ill loved one; heal from their own serious illness; address circumstances arising from a loved one's military deployment; or find safety from domestic violence, sexual assault or stalking.

Representatives of the Urban Institute presented initial research finding that a national policy that replaces a higher share of wages for lower-wage workers would reduce poverty, while researchers from New America, Brandeis University and UCLA's WORLD Policy Analysis Center shared research on promising paid-leave programs in the U.S. and internationally.

The conference included remarks from department officials, including Assistant Secretary for Employee Benefits Security Lisa M. Gomez, Chief Evaluation Officer Alix Gould-Werth, Chief Economist Sarah Jane Glynn, Wage and Hour Administrator Jessica Looman and Assistant Secretary for Disability Employment Policy Taryn M. Williams.

Attendees also listened as state officials and community-based organizations discussed best practices at work in New Jersey to promote paid family medical leave.

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